



LUTHERAN EDUCATION

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Focus on: Wisdom, Emotion, Special Children, and Counseling

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- Publisher:** Dr. John F. Johnson, President
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- Editor:** O. John Zillman, Department of Psychology
- Contributing Editor:** Ed Grube, Lutheran Education Association
- Associate Editors:** Gary Bertels, Department of Theology
William Duey, Department of Human Performance
- General Editor:** Peter E. Pohlhammer
- Regular Departments:**
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| <i>Today's Lutheran Educator</i> | Jon Laabs, Executive Director,
Lutheran Education Association |
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Here I Sit...Looking In My Wallet

By O John Zillman

Ever experience one of those times when you're really done for the day but you really just can't overcome inertia and get up from your desk, pack the briefcase with the papers you didn't finish grading and head home? Could be at five; could be at 7:30 pm after the late practice or rehearsal.

So we sit for a couple of minutes. Maybe rearrange the desk. Take the stapler apart. Open the center desk drawer and look w-a-a-y in the back and among the stray paper clips and old batteries, find the drawing that your kid gave you years ago, or maybe a thank you note from a parent.

Next time you have one of those transitional moments, do this instead. Open your wallet. No, not the way we're used to hearing that in Lutheran churches and schools, open it and pull everything out on your desk.

Okay, I'll go first. Among its contents are:

- My Illinois drivers' license with the bad photo, fairly accurate weight and, whew, it doesn't expire until next year.
- A Blockbuster movie rental card.
- My Concordia Health Plan cards - why do I keep carrying the one with the old co-pay amount on it and the new one? Wallets are like miniature basements - if you don't throw things away, they just take up space. And to think that I sit on this stuff every day.
- My health club membership card. Geez, gotta work out more.
- Three major credit cards.
- My Jewel Food Store "Preferred Customer Card" which hasn't scanned correctly for two years. I haven't felt "preferred" in a while.
- A 15% tip calculator card that I can surreptitiously check at the restaurant table out of view of those who don't know I always ask my wife to calculate the gratuity when she and I go out.
- Baby, confirmation, and high school graduation

pictures of my daughters; a “school picture day” photo of my wife from some years ago - it just happened to be one that I liked.

- A card with instructions for CPR. If you’re with me when it happens, don’t worry.
- A five euro note that I kept from our trip to France - handy when a teenage daughter asks for money.
- Twenty dollars left from the check I cashed last Friday. (She’s on to the euro thing. I’ll try asking her for her PIN number.)
- A slip of paper with my wife’s sizes on it – none of your business - that has weathered twenty-nine years of Christmas, birthday, Mothers Day and anniversary shopping.
- An expired museum pass from Paris, the business card from the guy in the service department at the Chevrolet dealer (which will get tossed when the warranty runs out), my Concordia University ID and a few other odds and ends.

Now, what’s in your wallet?

How many of the items that you carry are emblematic of a privilege that you have?

That driver’s license? Sure it gives you the right to operate a motor vehicle, but after about age sixteen that becomes more utilitarian. Since I’m way past the age that’s posted where certain beverages are sold, being “carded” is an infrequent and even gratifying occurrence. Ever shown up at an airport gate without it, though? Or get stopped for going a tad over the limit and have to retrieve it from a police station or court clerk – with cash? Suddenly you become quite aware of the unseen privilege that little cards afford you, whether you stash it in wallet or purse.

How much money could you spend if you could max out that plastic? Certainly not recommended but, okay, ever heard a really EXPENSIVE noise coming from your car just outside Flagstaff, AZ – and you live in the Chicago area? How many places can you shop, buy gas without paying first, order things online or accumulate airline miles?

Who’s there to help if you’re suddenly seriously ill or in an accident? God forbid, but will emergency room admission staff, nurses, medical technicians and doctors look after you without question? That medical insurance card is the one that’s really priceless.

How much can you fork over to your kid when they need field trip money...yesterday? (Will the teacher take euros?)

Now, look at that photo on your driver's license again. What's the race or ethnic background of the face in the picture? Anglo? African American? Latino? Asian? Middle Eastern? If denominational demographics of Lutherans correlate with the usual readership of this publication, it's most likely the first one.

Aside from shopping, driving, going to the health club, and the other privileges we carry, Peggy McIntosh (1988) suggests that perhaps the face in the photo is the one that carries the most.

Among those she names are:

- Being in the company of people of one's own race most of the time.
- Being able to rent or purchase a home in an area that one can afford and in which one would want to live and assuming that one's neighbors will be at least ambivalent, if not pleasant.
- Being able to shop alone in any establishment without being followed by the staff through the store.
- Turning on the television and seeing people of one's own race portrayed in meaningful roles.
- Going into a music or video store and finding music or movies in which one's race or language is represented; shopping in a grocery store that offers foods that are consistent with one's cultural background and tastes; going to a barber or hairdresser and knowing that the person there knows how to cut and style one's hair.
- Not having the store clerk automatically check one's charge card number against a list of fraudulent cards.
- Using one's own manner of speech...or dress...not answering mail (or phone messages) without others attributing these choices to the...morals, poverty or illiteracy of one's race.
- Doing well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to one's people.
- Never being asked to be the spokesperson for an entire race.
- If stopped for a traffic offense, being certain that it wasn't because the way one looks (or the car that one drives).
- Going home from a meeting of (school, church or other) organization one belongs to, feeling tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance, or feared.

- If one's day, week or year is going badly, one need not ask of each negative episode or situation if it had something to do with race.

These “unearned entitlements” (McIntosh, p. 191) and others are perhaps things that don't come to mind when we look at the differences among Americans from the viewpoint of the majority. The article from which they're excerpted is often that which my students in Diversity in American Society find the most eye-opening. We don't think about these things because we aren't put in the position to have to consider them; we have cultural blind spots.

For Lutheran schools in areas that are racially homogenous, serving a traditional Lutheran constituency, another backhanded privilege comes to mind:

- The school in which one teaches will not be referred to as an “urban school.”

The term itself can be a benign descriptor of place but more often conveys assumptions that are ascribed largely on the basis of the racial, ethnic, linguistic or economic background of the student population and the privileges they are assumed to lack - not always by their own experience, but by the prevailing assumptions of the quality of education, the families, the community, etc., etc. We in the system of Lutheran education can bestow or withhold privilege by our assumptions and categorizations in matters such as school funding, ownership and governance, academic standards, where teachers-in-training get their clinical experiences and student teaching assignments and where graduates of the Concordia University System consider and accept their initial Calls into ministry. Certainly there are myriad factors involved in all of these: what Peggy McIntosh terms the power of “white privilege” need not be a factor among them.

We in the system of Lutheran education can bestow or withhold privilege by our assumptions and categorizations...

“Diversity” is viewed in some quarters as a particular ideology, a sort of post-modern effort to empower some groups while making white people feel guilty for being white. Or it's viewed as a problem to be solved. To some, it carries the same threatening connotation as did the term “integration” in the past and there were people who didn't like that much either. Historically, America has always been racially, ethnically,

religiously and economically diverse and what some groups have done to maintain the economic and cultural *status quo* is a matter of record, if one chooses to read or listen to it.

The privileges that we carry, whether in our back pockets, purses or our viewpoints are always subject to one's perspective and interpretation – and that of others. When we have them, we may not even think much about them; when they're gone, things can change pretty fast. We rarely have to consider what it is like to never have had them at all. Regardless of whether our lives directly intersect with those who may lack the privileges that we carry, a systemic examination and re-examination of these and how we operationalize them is critical to the integrity of Lutheran education and ministry and a crucial point of learning for our students: either we help them understand their responsibilities or we help them understand that we understand critical differences and, even more, critical inequities. The greatest privilege, of course is to serve them well, and as our Christ-centered imperative, prepare them to serve God and each other in a “diverse, interconnected and increasingly urbanized church and world”.

I'm gonna put this stuff back in my wallet now, and go home.—*LEJ*

Reference:

- McIntosh, P. (1988). “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack” in Rothenberg, P. (2004) *Race, Class and Gender in the United States*, (6th Ed.), New York: Worth Publishers.

Education, Wisdom and the Trinitarian Imagination: Christ, Creation and Community in the Twenty-first Century

by Ralph Peters

What should be the ultimate purposes of education? Should we merely attempt to transmit a certain set of relatively impersonal skills and a predetermined body of objective information or should we also try to build character and develop human virtue through intensive human relationships? If we include the latter, which or whose values and virtues get top billing in a diverse, pluralistic society of competing and conflicting interests?

These kinds of questions have been asked and answered in a multitude of ways ever since such pioneering educators as Pythagoras and Plato began to reflect on them in the comparatively early days of Western civilization. Today's leading American educators would undoubtedly offer such goals as to become a reasonably informed and generally competent citizen in a democratic society, a sufficiently skilled economic worker to make a decent living and compete effectively in the ever-shifting marketplace, perhaps culturally cultivated enough to at least appreciate and, if gifted with the necessary talent and lucky enough to find the right opportunity, contribute to the artistic and literary achievements of civilization. They would certainly stress as well the necessity of knowing how to access and utilize the burgeoning information resources made available largely by and through our rapidly evolving informational technologies. Virtually no one, I suspect, who fancies themselves *au courant* with current mainstream debates over the most appropriate educational philosophy for our contemporary society would answer in the vein of an admonition of Jesus: ... "Be wise as serpents" ... (Matt. 10:16).

True wisdom from an educational point of view can be thought of as a depth of understanding and capacity for living that characteristically goes beyond surface appearance, superficial knowledge, or the conventional wisdom which is rarely questioned precisely because "everybody knows" thus and such is self-evidently true. The wise know how to "live well" in everyday life and when tragedy interrupts the normal routines of everyday life, they have resources to cope, having grappled with life's

deepest philosophical/theological questions about the meaning of life in the face of death or why the innocent suffer.

Wisdom can be manifest at even a relatively young age (Jesus manifested religious wisdom when he was just twelve) but more typically it emerges more fully after time and experience have refined and enhanced it like properly aged wine. Time and experience alone don't necessarily create wise humans of course; there are certain qualities of character and matters of circumstance that appear to be essential ingredients as well. Many of humanity's most revered and storied figures such as Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, Krishna, the Buddha, Lao-Tzu and Confucius are all regarded as wisdom teachers, among other things, offering sage observations, advice and criticisms to their respective times and places. Wisdom in this sense is nearly a lost virtue in our educational system and in society at large not because we somehow are necessarily less virtuous than societies past but because we have unwittingly evolved a culture inimical to wisdom.

In earlier eras the wisdom and authority of the elders were usually based on the knowledge and skills that, if duly cultivated, were readily evident to all as the golden by-product of maturity. However, in a society as computer dependent as ours is, a long life of productive work culminating in advanced age no longer necessarily confers superior knowledge or skill, especially in the operation of the key technology of our time. Young children now negotiate the world of cyberspace with greater alacrity than their grandparents. Beyond their deft computer skills, youth itself is supposed to be intrinsically valuable like no other time of life, or so advertisers relentlessly tell us. Sleek youthful bodies are the cultural ideal and so are computer savvy youthful minds. For better or for worse, in the computer age the manipulation and management of instantaneous information, often mastered by youth faster and better than their elders, is valued more than the slow and winding maturation process that is more often than not the precondition for a reflection-enriched wisdom.

There are still other cultural characteristics that militate against wisdom. If wisdom has something to do with viewing things in long term perspective, developing insight into the appropriate relationship between the part and the whole and then seeing the big picture which includes any and all others, then the conventional wisdom of our culture is anything but wise. We characteristically think in the short term, the next weekend, the next financial quarter, the next TV season, the next school

year, the next election. We are programmed and then rewarded by our political processes and economic operations to think in terms of self-interest most of the time and now and then in terms of the larger party, company or group interest.

The recent tidal wave of corporate scandals shows just how pervasive the “take the money and run” ethic is in the world of big business and high finance. There are almost no incentives left in our culture to think in terms of the “common good”, a pivotal concept that profoundly shaped the thinking of the founding fathers of America. In light of the virtual disappearance of the idea and ideal of the common good in the pluralistic America of today, the well known Lutheran author Martin Marty deserves credit for trying to stimulate a reconsideration of the notion from political, educational and religious viewpoints (Marty, 1999, 2000).

The image of a gentle wisdom just can't seem to take hold for long in a country invaded by conquistadors...

Over the last thirty years there has been frequent talk of a “knowledge explosion”, the fact that we have generated in a generation more information than in the previous five thousand. Yet it is clearly inconceivable to talk about a correlative “wisdom explosion”. If anything, wisdom is so far gone, so imploded and so rare in our culture that even mentioning it is cause for embarrassment or suspicion of pretentiousness. There might even quite possibly be an inverse relationship between the mere quantitative piling up of massive amounts of information and/or money and the qualitative achievement of wisdom. Indeed, it is difficult for us in contemporary defense-minded American society to even imagine a culture seriously devoted to a gentle wisdom like that of Jesus or the Buddha which characteristically bears the ethical fruit of universal compassion.

Take the most recent Star Wars movie, “Attack of the Clones,” for example. Yoda, once the very embodiment of the power of the still, small voice of gentle wisdom in the earlier series, now becomes “Yoda Strikes Back,” something of a ferocious warrior in this one, more of a master of the one-on-one light saber battle than the wisdom teacher pointing to the importance of mastering the evil and temptations within. The image of a gentle wisdom just can't seem to take hold for long in a country invaded by conquistadors, freed by means of a violent revolution, settled by rough-and-tumble pioneers chasing the horizon of Manifest

Destiny, bloodied by civil war, subdued by gun-slinging sheriffs and flag-waving cavalry in the “Wild West” and, in the last century, the key player in two World Wars and the home of the largest nuclear arsenal and highest homicide rate in the economically developed world (Needleman, 2002)

Why would American Christians even want to pursue something such as wisdom that seems so alien and antithetical to both our history and our contemporary culture? Because in a time when our values are being challenged from without by terrorism and subverted from within through corruption from the corporation to the church, all the diverse subcultures in America potentially have in common the cumulative wisdom tradition of humanity which remains a collectively recognized source and resource for recovering and renewing the moral basis of human living (Novak, 1994). Virtually all human cultures appeal to and continuously venerate wisdom figures and their teachings as the basis of what they consider most valuable or even sacred and a careful and fair-minded study of wisdom across cultures and through history demonstrates that there are many deep universal features, whatever the manifold surface cultural differences (Smith, 1991, 1992).

From a specifically Christian perspective, Scripture itself commends wisdom from beginning to end, the classical Christian theological tradition from Irenaeus to Aquinas is filled with references to wisdom and the first and defining doctrine of orthodox Christianity, the Trinity, can be construed as both a symbol and expression of wisdom.

It seems wise not to try to define wisdom too exclusively in sharply circumscribed and abstract terms. Wisdom is better understood experientially when it is observed, intuited, felt as a discernable depth and quality emanating out of the core of a human being or even, more broadly conceived, any being or, for that matter, Being. Indeed, it is critical if we are to really understand the fullness of the biblical and traditional meanings of wisdom not to limit its manifestations to humans. Wisdom is one biblical and traditional name for God and insofar as God is the ultimate creator, sustainer and transformer of each and all from great to small, wisdom is woven into the very fabric of all that is. Wisdom in this divine sense is the source, suchness and summit of the kosmos (the original Greek kosmos is preferable in this context to the conventional English cosmos because cosmos generally means just the one-dimensional physical universe but the multidimensional kosmos means cosmos plus various mental and spiritual dimensions as well) (Wilber, 2000). If God created the kosmos or the heavens and the earth

by wisdom, as Proverbs 3:19 suggests, then how can we as humans know or understand this divine wisdom?

Many Christian mystics and various prophets claim to know God directly but for the rest of us most of the time, we will need to settle for the Christian tradition that houses both the “Book of Scripture” (hopefully familiar to Protestants) and the “Book of Nature” (usually news to most Protestants). It was normative for Christian theologians from earliest times to regard creation as a source of revelation and knowledge about God. (Wilder, 1982). Even Martin Luther, famed for the Reformation slogan, “Sola Scriptura”, wrote this astonishing affirmation of the Christian creation tradition near the end of his life: “All creation is the most beautiful book or Bible, in it God has revealed and portrayed himself” (Santmire, 1985, p. 247). At the same time the Book of Scripture makes it clear enough that God’s transcendent aspect should not be overlooked or underplayed, especially when, for example, the Nazis were shamelessly sacralizing the false idols of blood and soil. However, such context-appropriate emphases should not distort the equal and opposite aspect of God’s divine immanence. Luther again, partly to make the additional point that nature is not merely the “mask of God” in his theological thinking: “His own divine essence can be in creatures collectively and each one individually, more profoundly, more intimately, more present than the creature is in itself...” (Ibid., p. 130).

Young Man Luther was an Augustinian monk before he entered the stage of history as the redoubtable leader of the Protestant Reformation. Although he differed from Augustine on some theological points, Luther retained many Augustinian influences as well, such as the powerful sense of God’s immanence. In any case Augustine’s mature theology is of intrinsic interest in terms of what it has to say about God, wisdom, the Trinity and creation.

It seems that the most natural human fantasy about God, given our impressive but nonetheless limited powers, would be to imagine God as most like an extraordinarily grandiose ruling patriarch, an infinitely powerful monarch, one ready and willing to exercise his omnipotence as arbitrarily and forcefully as any absolute despot might on any occasion. Significantly, Augustine explicitly rejects such an image of arbitrary power, claiming instead that God rules by the power of wisdom (*sapientiae virtute*), not by domination but by “*concursus*”: “He governs all the things in such a way that he allows them to function and behave in ways proper to them.” (Ibid., p. 62). The Lutheran theologian Paul Santmire

makes a convincing case that contemporary environmentally-attuned ears can plausibly hear an “ecological” God in such passages, a God who confers intrinsic value on and duly respects the built-in dynamics of his blessed, fertile and inherently good creation. Santmire in part acquired such listening skills from the great Lutheran pioneer in such matters, Joseph Sittler, and Lutherans are fortunate in this regard to have had one of their own do superb groundbreaking work in this area more than forty-five years ago, before most people even heard of the word “ecology” (Sittler, 2000).

In contrast to our modern secular-conditioned eyes, which look out the window and see creation as scientific matter to be measured and

In a strange way, scientific developments since Einstein...have enabled us to once again see “traces of the Trinity” in creation.

manipulated or as an economic resource or raw material for the production of industrial wealth or real estate to be bought and sold, Augustine saw creation as sacred, even as manifesting “traces of the Trinity”. As Santmire notes: “Augustine

does not think of himself as “reading in” (eisegesis) the Trinity into nature, but rather as approaching the “Book of Nature” in order to seek traces of the Trinitarian God who in fact is, for Augustine, actually and immediately there, as Creator and Governor of all things (exegesis)” (Santmire, p. 237). ecology (Lovelock, 1995) and the actual human life cycle as well as an ethically ideal human culture (Erikson, 1969).

Irenaeus shared with the mature Augustine an ecologically-friendly view of the Wisdom forming and sustaining creation but Irenaeus had a much more wisdom oriented perspective on human existence than did the original sin preoccupied Augustine. The wisdom tradition tends to, in the main, respect the human capacity for choice, learning and growth over time considerably more than Augustine (the early Augustine saw the growth of the soul in spatial terms, as an ascent from lower matter to higher spirit) often did (Brueggemann, 1972). Specifically, Irenaeus saw human beings in what would seem to us remarkably modern developmental terms. Irenaeus is the perfect Christian theological complement to all the more scientifically-oriented developmental psychologies of the twentieth century, such as Freud’s (psychosexual), Jung’s (psychospiritual), Erikson’s (psychosocial), Piaget’s (cognitive), Kohlberg’s (moral), etc. which stress stages of growth as the key to understanding the nature and purpose of our humanity. In the original Christian wisdom tradition as

defined by Irenaeus and confirmed by contemporary students of moral development (Nucci, 2001), we are not born original sinners, as Augustine claimed, nor are we born pristine and good, as modern romantics like Rousseau claimed. We must achieve wisdom through a developmental process of growth-to-goodness. Irenaeus conceived of Adam and Eve as the “children” of the human race, not grown up, not fully mature, not as wise as the human race can one day become (Simonson in Devine, 1973).

God provides a model for the embodied wisdom of full maturity in and through the life of Jesus. Jesus “recapitulates” human existence in the sense that he was an infant, a child, a youth and an adult just as the rest of us are if we follow the prefigured stages of development. Not only was Jesus born in the image of God like all of us but he grew into the likeness of God as well, fully unfolding his human potential, both body and soul, in the direction of becoming “fully alive”, which exemplifies God’s intention for all of us. The Son thus became one hand of God, especially concerned with modeling and developing even greater human potential than had been previously achieved. The Spirit became the other hand of God, was closely identified with Wisdom, and as such was and remains involved with the continuing creative activity of not only humans but all of creation as well. Thus Irenaeus is clearly moving in the direction of a wisdom interpretation of humanity, later largely derailed by Augustine, and a trinitarian understanding of God and creation more than a century before it becomes official church doctrine.

The Trinity is the central ecumenical doctrine of classical Christianity, simply assumed or given considerable attention by theologians as eminent and diverse as Sts. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, St. Patrick and John Scottus Eriugena, Martin Luther and John Calvin, Karls Barth and Rahner. Virtually no one would deny its importance to traditional Christianity, yet many contemporary Christians would be at a loss to explain its relevance for our current culture or Christianity today. Even though nearly all Christians are taught some pat formula about the Trinity when they first learn the rudiments of the faith, it seems clearly self-evident that most Western Christians never really learn to think very deeply or creatively in trinitarian terms (the Trinity never lost its centrality in Eastern Orthodoxy but in the West Jesus Christ became increasingly central and all-encompassing, thus more or less attenuating the theoretically equal roles of the other two persons of the Trinity). It takes some reflection on how we educate about the Trinity and some knowl-

edge of how Western culture unfolded to understand why Western Christians by and large lost a profoundly trinitarian Christianity and why we could all benefit from its recovery and renewal.

Most of us hear about the Trinity for the first time as children. It generally doesn't make much, if any, immediate sense at first hearing, couched as it is in paradoxical thinking. God is in three persons we are told, that is, God is and is not Christ, is and is not the Holy Spirit. After responding with a look of complete puzzlement, we are more often than not told it is a "mystery" and we leave it at that, often for the rest of our lives. We may encounter it yet again during catechetical or confirmation instruction because it has a taken-for-granted biblical basis, is part and parcel of our creeds, heard as a liturgical invocation or baptismal rite, referred to in many hymns and is the subject of "Trinity Sunday" once a year on the church calendar. We may hear about it as well if we study the history of Christian doctrine, perhaps finding out that, for all their differences, the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodoxy and most Protestant denominations all affirm the trinitarian decisions of the ecumenical Councils of Nicaea in 325 and Constantinople in 381. If we dig a little deeper, we may even learn that the classical formulation of the Trinity was an ingenious doctrine that the early Christian Church initially developed to resolve the apparent contradiction between the affirmation of an ultimately transcendent, omnipotently monarchical and exclusively monotheistic God on the one hand and the universal implications of the poignantly human incarnation of Jesus, the crucified Christ, on the other. Shortly thereafter, similar logic was applied to the Holy Spirit, thereby potentially transforming any vestige of a God long imaged as a singular and exclusive divine monarch or more recently and briefly as Father and Son, Inc. into a divine community of co-equal partners joined together in mutual loving relationships with each other and at the same time constantly issuing an ongoing invitation to the human community and all of creation to become a fuller part of this universal embrace of trinitarian love.

It is understandable in retrospect why the full potential of trinitarian thinking never really had much of a chance to develop in the Western Christian tradition in spite of all the superficial lip service paid to it. During the Council of Nicaea, Emperor Constantine was apparently interested in utilizing the doctrine of the Trinity to effect a compromise among warring theological/political factions, thereby bringing greater unity to the faith and more peaceful stability to the Empire (Rubenstein,

1999). It would not have occurred to Constantine to apply the egalitarian social model implied by the co-equal trinitarian community of love to the political pyramid of Roman society with the patriarchal emperor on top, ruling with a sharp and ready sword. Even though church historians like to write about the “Christianization” of the Roman Empire through figures like Constantine and his successor Theodosius, it is at least equally true that the church was “Romanized” over time with the emergence of the monarchical status of the papal throne (beginning with Pope Leo I the following century and climaxing with the imperial papacy some seven centuries later), complete with standing armies in some cases and in all cases a subordinate hierarchy of “servants”. A far cry indeed from the original band of co-equal disciples or Paul’s social leveling in Galatians 3:28 of Jew and Greek, rich and poor, male and female in Christ. Thus the Trinity became swept up in the same post-Constantinian vortex that transformed the organizational structure of the church from a more egalitarian-oriented religion of a persecuted minority to a more hierarchical-ly ordered religion of a privileged majority, which is still the basic structural situation in the modern world (Folk, 1991). Subsequently, given such an undemocratic political context,

Jesus is regarded by some as the King of the Jews, like Solomon, but Jesus turns out to be a king with a difference.

it should come as no surprise that Western theologians became more focused on what they referred to as the “immanent Trinity”, the internal relations of the divine beings with each other rather than the “economic Trinity”, the external relationships the triune God has with the world. What the triune God had to do with the salvation or well-being of the world became ever more of a question mark for the West and so out of such a medieval cloud of uncertainty, “Jesusolatry” appeared as the revealing if reductive modern answer.

Jesus, the embodiment of New Testament wisdom, can be seen as a kind of rough and sometimes paradoxical crisscross of the Old Testament wisdom figures of Solomon and Job but he goes well beyond them as well. Jesus is regarded by some as the King of the Jews, like Solomon, but Jesus turns out to be a king with a difference. Jesus is at first a celebrative and celebrated king but eventually becomes a more Job-like suffering king, but one who accepts self-suffering rather than inflicting it on others or even complaining about it. He is not the ancient

Near Eastern despot with omnipotent fantasies who regularly sought to demonstrate his powers over life and death through bloody battlefield victories over enemy armies and subsequent lifelong enslavement of the vanquished. Instead, Jesus was interpreted as Isaiah's suffering servant in death, even as his ministry as the Son of Man was understood in the service of universal life, love and liberation while he lived. However, the culmination of his life-giving ministry in life-destroying crucifixion went far beyond anything experienced by the long-suffering Job. Neither was Jesus the powerful and wealthy Solomonic monarch of ages past lording it over his subjects and rattling his saber against his enemies but rather a "king" who proclaims and practices a "kingdom" without conventional royal ranking, that is, "a discipleship of equals". Everyone becomes an equally royal son and daughter of God, so everyone is invited to the table of this king. Anyone who is diseased or impaired gets healed or repaired so all can in principle enjoy in equal measure the abundant riches of life and love offered at this regal feast of existence. Dissolving the traditional monarchical image of God into a set of co-equal relationships is, as we have seen, what the Trinity is all about and, not at all coincidentally, what the Jesus movement was all about.

The Jesus Seminar is a group of mostly liberal-minded New Testament scholars who are often sharply criticized by numerous critics for their challenges to both the traditional church and conventional scholarship. Whatever their intended biases or limitations, I believe the new image of Jesus developed by the Jesus Seminar has enormous potential for bridging the previously unbridgeable expanse between the Jesus of interdisciplinary scholarly research and the Christ proclaimed in the New Testament. The scholars of the Jesus Seminar have brought out a series of books which have begun to chip away at the eschatological prophet image of the historical Jesus dominant since Albert Schweitzer and have replaced it with a new dominant image of Jesus as wisdom teacher (Borg, 1994b). All the talk about end of the world judgments being at hand which were previously attributed to Jesus himself are now by and large attributed to his immediate predecessor, John the Baptist and his immediate successor, St. Paul (the end of the world now meaning the Second Coming of Jesus rather than the First Coming of the Kingdom of God that Jesus himself proclaimed). The style, let alone the substance, of Jesus' teaching gives him away as a wisdom teacher. The one-liner sayings or aphorisms and his realistic fictional stories or parables make us think, make us reconsider what we previously regarded as

self-evident and ultimately transform our conventional perspectives by turning them upside down – or right side up!

Other world-historical sages such as the Buddha also utilized similar methods for conveying their religious wisdom. This style doesn't simply dictate what the truth is in some predetermined doctrinal form but it invites you to think about what is being suggested and encourages you to draw your own conclusions: "consider seeing it this way" and "what do you think?" rather than "thus says the Lord" or "hear the word of the Lord". The substance of Jesus' wisdom teachings is an invitation to see and experience God as gracious, compassionate and all-embracing, cutting through all the rules and roles that both our society and religious establishments set up and continuously reinforce in order to pay homage to elitist definitions of affluence, achievement and appearance rather than engaging in mutual love and reciprocal respect issuing forth from a sincere heart and thereby becoming an equal participant in God's new order (Borg, 1994a, ch. 4, 5).

Jesus' apparent failure as eschatological prophet was compensated for by the church with an endlessly deferred promise of his Second Coming. While hope can spring eternal from such a belief if one keeps the faith in the Second Coming at some point at the presumed forthcoming end of time, if one gets out of the eschatological game altogether, then the critical content of Jesus' wisdom teaching takes on a fresh relevance and immediacy. Jesus' criticisms of the family when it got in the way of wider human solidarity, his criticisms of status when it got in the way of honoring equal human dignity, his criticisms of wealth when it got in the way of sharing the riches of God's bounty with the less fortunate and his criticisms of religious "purity" and piety when it justified all the previous criticized values taken together added up to a kind of "tough-love" wisdom which cut through the many hypocrisies and illusions of the society of his time. When one comes to the disquieting conclusion that these series of criticisms apply to our society as much or even more than his own, then the failed and therefore subsequently irrelevant eschatological prophet who comes and goes after a short and ignominiously ended thirty years or so on the stage of history winding up in the final analysis as something of a deluded, if tragic, fool suddenly becomes transformed into a powerfully relevant critical voice of undeniable wisdom that rings as loudly and true in our time as his. The negative, critical side of wisdom helps one "die" to the conventional culture and the positive, transformational side assists one in being "born" anew,

now centered in the unconventional world of a new spirit which is more directly grounded in God's path to living more abundantly with others through mutual love and reciprocal service. Now it is possible to begin to glimpse how the embodied wisdom of the historical Jesus retains its relevance equally to yesterday and today and in so doing begins to imperceptibly merge into the eternal backdrop of the Cosmic Christ where the Word and Spirit of wisdom has always been available and once upon a time long ago in Galilee became fully incarnate in and through Jesus of Nazareth.

Such concerns for trinitarian wisdom brings us to a consideration of the Holy Spirit (the Hebrew word for spirit is *ruach*, a feminine noun, and the Greek *pneuma* is a neuter noun so there seems to be no linguistic basis for assuming the Holy Spirit is exclusively or necessarily masculine as many Christians have done), the third person of the Trinity, who did not come to the original Christian community one at a time but rather came to them all at once. According to Acts 2:4, "all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit". The curse of the tower of Babel is reversed and redeemed and all the diverse languages of the world are no longer obstacles to communication but in the Spirit become vehicles of communication. The diverse parts fit together at long last as a unified whole. Consonant with the larger image of the Trinity, there is unity and diversity and diversity in unity. The action of communication becomes an interaction of mutual communion.

The Trinity can serve as a wisdom symbol of all the foregoing. Wisdom pervades the creation thanks to the wisest of Creators. The historical Jesus embodied and expressed divine wisdom fit for human consumption. The wisdom of the Spirit can bring us together any time we open our closed selves to the divine fire that melts down our hard hearts so they can be recast as responsive hearts that beat in synchronous communion with each other.—*LEJ*

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*Dr. Ralph Peters is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Concordia College, New York. This material was first presented in a longer and somewhat different form to the Lutheran Education Association Convocation in Minneapolis. Other writings by Dr. Peters include a chapter in the book *Reweaving the Fabric: The Family in Context* edited by the President of Concordia, New York, Dr. Viji George.*

The Student with Asperger's Syndrome in the Lutheran School Classroom

by Steven A. Kaatz

The number of children identified with Asperger's Syndrome (high functioning autism) mushroomed in the last decade. Predictably, Lutheran school enrollment reflects this trend. The purpose of this article is to introduce this puzzling disorder to Lutheran educators, thereby assisting them to reach and to teach children with Asperger's Syndrome (AS). The article is divided into several parts; diagnosis, definition, history, characteristics, and suggestions for both the classroom teacher and the religious educator. A list of timely references for those interested in exploring Asperger's Syndrome further is provided at the end of the article.

Diagnosis

There is no blood test, urinalysis, X-ray, brain scan or other medical procedure that will prove the existence of Asperger's Syndrome in a child. Indeed, the diagnosis is in large part inferred on the basis of interpretation and the exclusion of similar disorders.

A number of rating scales may be administered, including; Autism Diagnostic Interview, Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, The Psychoeducational Profile - Revised, and the Childhood Autism Rating Scale (Cumine, Leach & Stevenson, 2001). Furthermore, a number of qualitative assessments may be used to gather information about social interaction and communication. A developmental history, an educational history and a medical history may all be taken. A test of cognitive ability, usually an individual intelligence test, is often administered.

Although the children who enter Lutheran schools will typically have been previously diagnosed, it is helpful to be aware of the specific diagnostic criteria used. Asperger Syndrome is considered part of the broad Pervasive Developmental Disorder category. These disorders are fully described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, text - revision (DSM IV-Tr) published by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2000). Psychiatrists and psychologists who diagnose AS use the DSM IV-Tr as their guide.

Besides Asperger's Syndrome, the Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) category in DSM IV-Tr (APA, 2000) includes other diagnoses. They are; Autistic Disorder, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

The diagnostic criteria for Asperger's Syndrome in the DSM IV-Tr (APA, 2000) include six main points and several sub points. The child must display qualitative impairment in social interaction; restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities. There must be clinically significant impairment in social, occupational or other important areas of functioning. There is no significant general delay in language nor is there is any clinically significant delay in cognitive development. Age-appropriate self-help skills, adaptive behavior (other than in social interaction), and curiosity about the environment are not delayed. Finally, criteria are not met for schizophrenia or any other Pervasive Developmental Disorder (APA, 2000, p.84).

One other label in the PDD category that all Lutheran educators should be aware of is PDD - NOS, Pervasive Developmental Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified. This might appear in the child's medical record and/or on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) from the public school. In the author's experience, PDD - NOS is usually used when the psychiatrist or psychologist is cognizant of a serious problem in social interaction and/or stereotyped activities, but isn't actually sure which label to attach to the child.

There is no known, specific cause for AS, nor is the exact prevalence known. According to the DSM IV-Tr, the disorder is diagnosed about five times more often in boys than in girls (APA, 2000, p 82). Others maintain the gender gap is actually as many as 10 boys identified for every girl (Cumine et al., 2001).

Definition

Although AS engenders continuing controversy concerning its cause, diagnosis, and remediation, the following working definition would be accepted by most clinicians and teachers in the field: Asperger Syndrome is a severely incapacitating, complex, life-long developmental disability typically occurring during the first three years of life. It is the result of a neurological disorder.

Each child with AS manifests the disorder in his or her own unique way. It is only through interaction with the child (and family) in a variety

of settings over a period of time that the individual expression of the disorder can be understood.

Brief History of Asperger's Syndrome

The first recorded mention of the term “autism” was by a Swiss named Bleuler in 1911. Leo Kanner, a Boston psychiatrist, wrote the first paper on autism in 1943 describing it as an “autistic disturbance of affective contact”. A year later, 1944, a Viennese pediatrician, Hans Asperger, wrote his doctoral dissertation based upon his study of four boys whom he described as “troublesome but fascinating”. These boys were found to be unusual in their social, linguistic, and cognitive skills. Dr. Asperger used the descriptor, “autistic psychopathy”. His paper was quite hopeful about the boys’ future, possibly due to fear that the Nazis would kill any children seen as “defective.” A highly regarded man of medicine he died in 1980, without knowing that the syndrome bearing his name would become widely recognized (Cumine, Leach & Stevenson, 2001; Attwood, 2001).

“...the prevailing view is that Asperger's Syndrome is a variant of autism and a Pervasive Development Disorder” (Attwood).

Asperger's work was not translated into English until 1991, perhaps due to anti - German sentiment following WWII. Lorna Wing, in 1981, was the first to use the term “Asperger's Syndrome” as she described children very much like those originally discussed by Asperger. It was not until 1994 that the disorder was first included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Today . . . “the prevailing view is that Asperger's Syndrome is a variant of autism and a Pervasive Development Disorder” (Attwood, 2001, p. 16).

Characteristics

As pointed out in the section on definition, each child with AS is unique. Therefore, describing characteristics is necessarily problematic. Nonetheless, there seem to be a number of commonly held traits. Being aware of these will enable the classroom teacher to be more understanding of both the individual and the family. It will also alert the teacher to forms of instruction that may be effective.

The Center for the Study of Autism (nd) divides common traits of people with AS into three main areas; language, cognition and behavior. Concerning language-children with AS typically present lucid speech

before age four. Their grammar and vocabulary are usually quite good although language is sometimes quite repetitive and may have a stilted quality about it. The voice itself may be flat and lacking affect.

A common trait in the second main area, cognition, is that students labeled AS are often obsessed with a particular topic and become extraordinarily knowledgeable about it. In childhood, they may be tagged as “the little professor”. Topics may include just about any object. The author has known students obsessed about John Deere tractors, dog breeds, Sears, plumbing fixtures, subways, and World War II. These topics may change throughout childhood.

The ability to memorize and recite a great number of facts about a particular topic does not indicate true comprehension or the ability to manipulate the memorized facts. For example, a child with AS may have memorized a great many facts about our solar system. If the teacher asks a higher level, age appropriate question such as, “If there were Martians and they arrived on earth what do you think would surprise them?” or “How would you figure out much closer Saturn is to the earth than Neptune?” the child may be flummoxed.

It is not unusual for those with AS to approach fellow students, teachers and/or classroom visitors to initiate a monologue about their topic, coming close enough to violate the other’s personal space, all the time quite unaware that the other person is simply not much interested in the subject of their obsession. Thus it is sometimes difficult to carry on an authentic conversation with a student with AS because he has a tendency to return to his topic of obsession.

Conversation is also made complicated because these students often lack what is termed a theory of mind. (Frith, 1989). Researcher Uta Frith and her colleagues formed the hypothesis that, “children with this syndrome have an impairment in the fundamental ability to ‘mind read’” (Attwood, 2001, p. 112). This means that the student cannot appreciate the fact that others have needs, beliefs and desires that are different than hers. There are many and significant consequences of this lack of awareness. For example, she has difficulty predicting others’ behavior, making the world even more mysterious and uncertain for her. Because she often cannot understand other students’ intentions or motives nor understand the notion of deception, she can become the butt of jokes and can be easily manipulated.

What may appear to be a lack of empathy may just be the inability to

understand the emotions of others. The writer is acquainted with a young girl in a Lutheran school who carries around hard candy which she distributes to people who she thinks are having a tough day, although she is never sure what to say or if her instincts are correct. It remains her way of demonstrating empathy.

Being unable to decipher the social world, the child with AS often remains a social isolate. There are no invitations to birthday parties, sleepovers, or ball games. The adolescent with AS is well aware of being outside the social arena. Parents have reported to the author that their teenager with AS is depressed and often cries because of the pain of being left out. Yet he doesn't understand why. What is this thing called a date that his high school peers keep talking about? Nor does he know how to approach peers to gain social acceptance. According to Stanton (2000) high school is, for the AS child, a "mine field in a jungle populated by predators" (p.86).

Social skill problems also occur because children with AS may display an amazing lack of inhibition when relating to others. What they think is what they say. For example, "Are you Nancy's mother? You sure are fat!" or "For a student teacher who is 20 years old, your acne is really bad."

The lack of theory of mind also means that children with AS have an inability to lie. They may have difficulty separating fact from fiction at an age when their peers find this task relatively easy. The latter trait has tremendous implications for teachers in both the instructional area and the interpersonal arena. Similarly, the students are often wedded to concrete thinking. Thus, the abstract thinking required for mathematics and higher-level understanding is sometimes lacking completely or, at best, is only partially formed.

Ability, as measured by intelligence tests, varies among those labeled AS. Many are above the normal range in verbal ability but quite below average in performance abilities. This discrepancy may be manifested in the fact that many also display dyslexia, dysgraphia (writing disability) and/or dyscalculia (mathematics disability).

The third and final area, motor activities, joins the two other broad areas of Asperger characteristics, language and cognition. The movements of children with AS tend to be clumsy and awkward. These students can become easily angered and confused in group games, especially when someone doesn't "follow the rules", as often happens in childhood activities. Inappropriate social interaction may be displayed when

the student is angry about an infraction or a change in rules during a sporting event. Rapidly moving games that require quick reflexes are likely to be extremely frustrating for those with AS. This means that recess and physical education classes can be traumatic for the child with AS.

This section would be incomplete without detailing several of the inherent strengths of children with AS. “Children with ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] have endearing and positive attributes” (Norgard, 2004, p. 20). Their innocence and honesty are often refreshing. Deception is difficult or impossible for them. It is rare that they are out to impress others.

When expectations are understood and part of the routine, children with AS are compliant. They also have the motivation to complete familiar routines perfectly and precisely (Janzen, 1996; Norgard, 2004).

Given the presence of the characteristics outlined above, in one form or another, it is perfectly understandable that these students are often labeled odd, eccentric, lacking in common sense, strange or just plain “quirky.” It is fortunate that we belong to a God who loves even the quirky among us. It is the task of the Lutheran teacher to relate this truth to all the students, including those with AS and their families. The last section of this article presents some instructional techniques to aid in this task.

Classroom Techniques

Given the definition of AS and its common characteristics described above, there is no doubt that instructing a child with AS may present quite a challenge. However, it can be immensely rewarding as well. The popular dictum of teacher educators applies here, “Good teaching is good teaching is good teaching.” In other words, many proven, effective instructional techniques used with regular students are effective for special students, such as those with AS.

The child with AS presents an excellent opportunity for the Lutheran school to co-operate with the local public school system and/or the intermediate unit which provides special education. Students with AS are eligible for special education under the current federal mandate of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and concurrent state legislation. If the students do not have an IEP (Individual Education Plan) written in cooperation with parents and the local public school agency, it should be pursued so the students may receive specialized assistance as necessary.

If the student does enroll in the Lutheran school carrying an active IEP, the teacher(s) and administration should become familiar with the document and its supporting information. A new IEP is to be written at least every year. If the current IEP is not meeting the student's needs, the parents have the right to insist on a new one. Educators in Lutheran schools should expect to be part of the team that writes the new IEP. Under the IDEA, every child with a disability has the right to a "free and appropriate education", commonly referred to as FAPE.

A school district of even moderate size may employ an autism specialist that could be consulted. Teachers in Lutheran schools could visit local programs set up especially for students with AS. The state department of education's autism specialist can be contacted. Intermediate districts may have their own programs for Asperger's Syndrome as well as having a specialist on staff. (Depending on the state, intermediate units that function between the local district and the state level, are known as an ECSU, BOCES, CESA, Co-ops, IU, etc.). These resources could also guide teachers (and parents) to any local support groups.

The author encourages consultation with a speech therapist who has experience working with children diagnosed under the Pervasive Development Disorder category. The therapist can be helpful in many ways. A qualified speech therapist can assist the child in "reading" faces and emotions. She can teach the student how to engage in the usual give and take of normal conversation. The therapist can work with the student to develop appropriate social interactions. She can make suggestions to the teacher about how to implement and reinforce necessary social skills.

Direct instruction in social skills is necessary. Children with AS don't just pick these up as other children do. Examples were given in the characteristics section of the lack of verbal inhibition. The student with AS must be explicitly taught, for example, that what she says may be true, (Nancy's mother may indeed be fat, the student teacher may have serious acne), but these are phrases that are not to be said to the person. They may be thought but not said.

Any new social situation that the class may encounter, such as a field trip, a concert or a guest speaker must be thought through proactively by the teacher. The child with AS must be carefully prepared for any change in routine or any social interaction not experienced before. The child may have been instructed on how to behave for a visiting choir but not understand that this behavior should transfer to listening to a guest presenter.

One of the most popular methods of teaching social skills is the social story (Cusick, 2003). This technique originated with Carol Gray of Michigan. Gray (1993) lays out specific rules and examples for using these social stories that are developed by the teacher and student working together. Here is a brief example (adapted from Rowe, 1999, p. 13)

There are lots of children in the lunchroom eating.

Children often like to talk while they are eating.

Sometimes children forget to close their mouths when eating.

I will try to stay calm when I see children eating with their mouths open.

I will try to eat my own lunch and not worry about the way other children are eating their lunch.

These stories have multiple applications and can be used when preparing the student with AS for a new situation or for reinforcing current appropriate behavior.

As noted in the section on characteristics, physical education and recess can be difficult for the child with AS. Therefore, it is essential that

As much as is feasible, children with AS must be prepared beforehand for any changes of routine...

any playground monitors and physical education teachers be made aware of the characteristics of children with AS. At recess, a balance must be struck between the need for these children to be alone on

the one hand and the need for them to learn to interact with their peers (and vice versa) on the other hand.

Sometimes the child with AS can excel in an individual sport such as track or swimming. He may also succeed in the goalie position, which has but one task that occurs in a circumscribed area. As much as is feasible, children with AS must be prepared beforehand for any changes of routine in P.E. class and/or changes in recess rules.

Physical education is another area in which cooperation with the local district can be helpful. If written into the IEP, an adaptive physical education specialist can work with the child in a public school and/or give suggestions to the P.E. teacher in the Lutheran school. The latter may be encouraged to take classes in adaptive physical education.

There are some basics for instructing students with AS. Be clear. Be direct. Don't overload verbally. Do not use idioms or metaphors, as these students are often literal in their understanding. Using expressions

like, "Are you a little hoarse (horse)?" or "I have a frog in my throat" can be unnecessarily confusing or frightening to a child with AS. Trying to control behavior through facial expressions, e.g. the "evil eye", won't work.

Students with AS usually can't "take the hint." For example, most students will quiet down if the teacher says, "Seems like it's getting a little noisy in here." Students with AS often won't. It is more effective to say, "Everyone lower your voices please". If the teacher asks, "Can you close the window?" the student with AS may reply, "Yes, I can" and keep on with her work. Be intentional when making requests. When giving directions, it may be necessary to use the student's name; otherwise he doesn't think the directions apply to him.

Make sure classroom rules are clear and are posted. The child with AS may have her own set of rules in her notebook or taped to her desk. Don't try to use logical argument. Simply state the rule and the infraction that broke the rule. Or commend the child for the specific rule followed.

The *characteristics* section noted the proclivity of the student with AS to obsess about a topic. This can be handled several ways. Behavior modification might be used to reduce the number of times the topic is brought up. Work the topic into a report. At the beginning of the year the whole paper might be about the topic. As the year goes on, the topic is allowed less and less in an assignment. Or the youngster may be allowed five minutes a day to talk about his topic of interest. Another approach is to allow the student to obsess only at certain times of the day and in certain places.

To widen interests and to make positive use of the ability to memorize, play classroom games based on *Jeopardy* or *Concentration* or *Who wants to be a millionaire?* When using co-operative learning activities, assign explicit roles, make sure the student with AS gets one that matches her ability and doesn't highlight her weakness.

The need for routine and structure has been mentioned several times. An effective elementary teacher will always put the schedule on the board. For the child with AS, an additional schedule may be necessary on her desk. She may want to cross out each activity as completed in order to be able to anticipate what comes next. Some teachers use Velcro strips that can be rearranged according to the day. Other teachers have a series of slots on a bulletin board. Each day a paper with an

activity is put into each slot to show the order of the day's events.

For many youngsters with AS, any unexpected change in routine can cause a meltdown (becoming extremely agitated, screaming, shouting "No, no, no!", running out the door, throwing oneself on floor, etc.). Therefore the teacher must prepare the student early and often for any change in the schedule.

Special arrangements can be made with the principal to inform the teacher of any fire drill, terrorism drill, tornado drill etc. Some children with AS can be counted on to talk about the unexpected event for many days after it happens.

The child with AS often thinks only literally. This causes problems as more emphasis is placed on higher-level skills in reading. In the early grades the teacher can work on prediction and steer the child away from fantasy books and into non-fiction ones. Requiring the student to write both "made-up" and "true" stories can help the child think less literally. At all grade levels "mapping" out a story or part of a textbook can be helpful. This is also called "webbing" or "semantic organizers" (Pehrsson & Denner, 1989).

For teaching content, there are a number of helpful publications such as *Guiding reading through text a review of study guides* (Wood, Lapp & Flood, 1992); *I read it but I don't get it* (Tovani, 2000); *Textbooks and the students who can't read them: A guide to teaching content* (Ciborowski, 1992) and *Differentiating instruction in the regular classroom* (Heacox, 2002). These are all listed in the references at the end of this article.

Consistency in vocabulary is essential. This is nowhere more true than in mathematics. Is it "times" or "multiply," is it "subtract" or "take away," do you "borrow" or "regroup"? Many children will intuitively understand the pair of terms are identical; it is unlikely the child with AS will come to that understanding independently. Be as literal as possible when teaching the basics, use manipulatives, it is very hard for many youngsters with AS to imagine things. Literal thinking is also problematic later in mathematics. First she learned "x" was a letter, and then it meant multiply; now it is a variable with no fixed value.

All of the above means it is necessary for the teachers, the parents and the student, as appropriate, to consider how far the student with AS can go in mathematics. This is an individual decision, of course. Learning practical math skills might make much more sense than trying and failing in abstract math classes.

As the young person with AS transitions to a middle school or to high school or to another elementary school, it is suggested that a *Hello Book* (Carrington, 2001) be constructed. The actual shape and contents may vary but it should always serve as a brief, practical introduction to the student and family. It is helpful to have a current picture on the front along with the name, birth date, and any other information deemed essential. A number of lists can be included; "I do these things well; I find these difficult; some things that really bother/upset me; here are some reinforcers that don't work for me; these are reinforcers that help me; these are some teaching techniques that really help me; when it comes to sports these are my likes and dislikes; I have these allergies; these are the drugs I take with their side effects on me; and if I start to meltdown (I try not to) here's what to do. Naturally, the student should construct this book to the maximum extent possible.

Finally, it is profitable for the teacher and the parents to instruct the child with AS about the disorder. It is important to reassure the child that he is not retarded or stupid. It is also important to be aware of her strengths and needs. Make sure that the youngsters can articulate these

As always, remember that each child with AS has different needs and different strengths.

traits. It will be necessary to advocate for themselves in the future.

Certainly the young person should be encouraged to read accounts of people with Asperger's Syndrome who have done well, such as Dr. Temple Grandin (1995). Her books

and videos are insightful. This is also where the Hello booklet noted earlier can be of help. The Lutheran school should be a place where differences are accepted and all are assured of the love of God.

A number of helpful resources are available to assist the classroom teacher who wishes to further explore the special needs of the student with AS. A number of these resources can be found at the end of the article.

Youth ministers / Religion teachers

A number of the ideas articulated above will apply to all who work with students diagnosed with AS. However, there are some suggestions specifically applicable to youth leaders, catechetical instructors and the like. As always, remember that each child with AS has different needs and different strengths.

Using the *Hello Book* mentioned previously, have a one to one con-

versation with the student labeled AS. Help her to articulate how AS affects her life and learning and how you can best work with her. The student needs practice in advocating for herself.

Before any youth with AS is expected to participate in a ceremony, such as confirmation, or a presentation, try and show a videotape from the previous year. Or tape a rehearsal with several willing “actors” from the group. The student and parents can watch this over and over. Do NOT change the child’s place in line or in any way upset the routine on the day of the ceremony.

Before first communion it may be helpful to have the child with AS taste unconsecrated wine and a wafer. This will prevent any embarrassing exclamations or even having the youth spit out the elements at the communion rail. When preparing for communion also remember to be consistent in verbiage, use one word; “wafer” or “host” or “bread”. If necessary, explicitly teach there are several names for the same object. Be aware that while theologically abstract concepts are hard for everyone to grasp, they may be near impossible for those with AS e.g. atonement, the real presence and sanctification.

Consider having the youth (and possibly a parent) explain to the group what AS means, and why he may act “quirky”. Adolescents can be surprisingly understanding and supportive when they have a reasonable explanation for behavior.

Spontaneity is fun for most teens. Youth groups thrive on action, modifying activities as they go. This can be excruciating for the adolescent with AS. Try to warn him of any coming changes and what those changes might mean. Understand what might trigger a meltdown and what action can be taken. Consult regularly with the teachers and parents. The church youth group can be the one peer activity where he can fit in or it can be just another social “failure.” Above all, handle with prayer.—LEJ

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Steven Kaatz is an associate professor of education in the special education graduate program at Bethel University in St. Paul, MN. He graduated from Concordia, River Forest, IL in 1970. His Master's degree in learning disabilities is from the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire and his PhD from the University of Minnesota. He has taught in both Lutheran and public schools in the U.S. and Asia.

Emotional Intelligence: Can Lutheran Educators Take it for Granted

by Marilyn Stroik

A pastor pulls a parishioner out of his vehicle and claims that it was all right because he had “righteous indignation.”

One half of a Lutheran school’s faculty won’t talk to or sit at a table with the other half because they disagree with a decision made by the Church Council.

Angry about a tuition discrepancy, a parent throws a book and pulls a phone out of the wall in a principal’s office.

Not all of these incidents occurred at the same school, but they did occur in Lutheran schools. As Lutherans, ours tends to be a cognitive faith based on “knowing,” not “feeling.” This knowing is a gift from God. *Luther’s Small Catechism* states, “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.” We’d rather not deal with emotions. They can be messy, confusing, and untrustworthy. Unfortunately they continue to rear their ugly heads at church council meetings and parent/teacher conferences.

Scripture says we have a Lord of emotion: “God is love” (1 John 4:16). But it also says, “I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God” (Exod. 20:5), The Lord’s anger burned against Moses (Exod. 4:14), and Jesus wept (John 11:35). We are made in His image.

We know we can sin in thought, word, and deed: “But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matt. 5:28). Is this an emotion - or more of a game plan? Are emotions the same as thoughts?

Daniel Goleman’s book *Emotional Intelligence* (1995) brought popular attention to the study of emotion and the why and how of anger, rage, and fear. Goleman asserted that the book was written as a guide to making sense of the senseless (p. xi) and further stated that I.Q., the traditional measurement of a person’s intellectual capacity, had less to do with success in life than “E.Q.” the emotional quotient, and that E.Q. can be taught.

Emotional Domains

Yale University researcher, Peter Salovey, has designated five areas or domains in which individuals must be competent in order to be considered emotionally intelligent:

1. **Knowing One's Emotions:**
This involves knowing what you're feeling when you're feeling it. Can you tell the difference between anger and disappointment? Can you use your emotions to make life decisions that you can live with?
2. **Managing Emotions:**
Are you able to control your responses to anger, not allowing yourself to be swept away? Are you able to delay gratification or not allow yourself to be paralyzed by worry or depression?
3. **Motivating Oneself:**
Can you persist in pursuing your goals despite setbacks? Are you able to remain optimistic? Can you maintain hope?
4. **Recognizing Emotions in Others:**
Can you read another person's body language? Do you understand how another may be feeling? Can you display empathy?
5. **Handling Relationships:**
Can you function harmoniously in a group? Are you able to express yourself assertively, rather than aggressively?

If all we need to do is teach behavioral skills, why aren't we better behaved? Is it the devil or adrenaline?

For the good I want to do I do not; but the evil I do not want to do - this I keep on doing.

Romans 7:19

Universal Emotions

Prior to 1964, emotions were widely believed to be part of cultural conditioning. It was thought they were taught to us along with their appropriate forms of expression. Anthropologist Paul Eckman set out to prove just that by traveling to New Guinea with photographs of American faces, each expressing one strong emotion. He told stories to members of the Fore tribe, an isolated, stone-age culture, and asked them to pick which face they thought would go with the story. Much to his surprise, instead of having difficulty with this task, the tribe members were able to pick the appropriate pictures with uncanny accuracy. This led Eckman to conclude that contrary to popular belief, some emotions seemed to be universally recognized and, and therefore, could be biologically based.

Researchers disagree as to how many emotions there are and which may be called universal, but there is general agreement that fear, anger, sadness, and joy are recognized by all cultures. These are the so-called “basic” emotions that appear to be innate parts of our biology as human beings. These basic emotions flare up quickly, lasting from a few seconds to a few minutes. In contrast, blends and combinations of emotions such as love, guilt, shame, embarrassment, pride, jealousy, etc. take longer to build than the basic emotions and longer to die away. They are considered the higher cognitive or secondary emotions. They are also more susceptible to cultural manipulations in how they are expressed and repressed.

The Anatomy of a Feeling

With technological advances such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), which uses magnets and radio waves to gain images of brain tissue, and Positron Emission Tomography (PET) which uses radioactive dyes, we are able to not only look into the brain but to observe physiological brain activity as it happens.

At the top of the spinal cord is a cluster of brain cells called the *brainstem*. It controls the basic life functions of breathing and metabolism. Circling the brain stem is the next layer called the *limbic system*, the control center for emotions. On top of that is a double layer of cells called the *cortex*, where comprehension and planning take place, and over that, the *neocortex*. This is the area of higher thought: strategizing, appreciation of the arts, and long-term planning.

The limbic system and the neocortex communicate continuously back and forth through brain cells called *neurons*. As they do this, they form pathways called *neural networks*. We feel with the limbic system, and we can reflect on those feelings with the neocortex.

Emotional memories reside in a part of the limbic system called the *amygdala*. This almond-shaped structure lies on both sides of the brain stem. Unlike most of the brain, the amygdala is almost fully formed at birth, and we begin recording our emotional memories immediately. Throughout our adult life we may be accessing these memories without even knowing it, experiencing feelings that were recorded in us before we had words to express their meaning.

As information is taken in by our senses, it is sent to the cortex for processing, but it is simultaneously sent to the amygdala. Here it is compared to other emotional memories. If the amygdala decides that we are

in potential danger, it begins readying the body for defense, a reaction known as the *fight-or-flight* response.

With anger, blood flow increases to the hands, heart rate increases, and adrenaline is released for extra energy. With fear, blood flows to the legs, and a release of hormones increases attention and alertness. Because the pathway of information is shorter to the amygdala than to the neocortex, the amygdala can do all this before the neocortex gets involved. We may jump in fear, out of the way of a snake before we realize it was just a tree branch. We react before we think.

If an emotional memory is strong enough, or the danger perceived by the amygdala as great enough, the amygdala can hijack us on an emotional roller-coaster ride of anger or rage before the neocortex tells us we're overreacting to a situation. This experience is called *flooding*. Anger builds on anger and the more we experience it the less provocation the amygdala needs to elicit its response. Contrary to popular belief, venting anger does not clear the air, but may actually cause anger to escalate to rage.

Are We More Emotional?

The basic emotions have been necessary for survival. The fight or flight response that kept our ancestors a step ahead of ravenous animals and marauding armies does the same thing for us today when we perceive danger. But the brain makes no distinction between physical and psychological threats. When our ideas are challenged or we feel ostracized socially, we go through the same physical response readiness that we would if we were preparing for gladiatorial combat. This process is called *downshifting* and is responsible for the behaviors cited at the beginning of this article.

While we have always had to deal with threatening circumstances ...we seem to be dealing more poorly with the effects and governance of our emotions.

While we have always had to deal with threatening circumstances in a sinful world, it is not our imagination that we seem to be dealing more poorly with the effects and governance of our emotions. A study (Achenback, 1989) comparing the emotional states of children aged 7-26 from the mid-1970s until the mid-1980s reported increases in social problems, anxiety and depression, attention and thinking problems, delinquency and aggression.

Goleman believes that changes in society are the chief reasons many children struggle with emotional intelligence today. Limited family time means children may spend hours watching T.V. and playing video games instead of interacting with family and friends learning the relationship skills for harmonious living.

When I was a child my friends and I walked to and from school together, talking, laughing, and planning. I watch now in my own school as children arrive separately, emerging from the family car, the bulk of their interpersonal relationships taking place during the school day. I listen to parents arranging play dates with each other's children, and I remember how my friends and I roamed freely over a five to six block area, calling at each other's houses. Our children seem so much more isolated.

Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Proverbs 22:6

It is in childhood that the greatest opportunity exists for forming emotionally intelligent responses to stressful situations. Patterns of emotional behavior practiced over and over form neural networks in the brain much like paving a highway. Children do not *grow out* of continued behaviors so much as *grow into* them.

The neocortex is not fully developed until the ages of 16 - 18. The time prior to this is a critical period in which children may be educated in emotionally intelligent responses to stressful situations. Although the brain continuously forms neural pathways as we learn, those pathways set down early in life govern our patterns of behavior as adults. Tremendous effort, usually in the form of professional intervention, is required for change after this time. Even then, while we may be successful in changing harmful behaviors, the emotions that caused them still persist.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

2 Timothy 1:7

As a Lutheran educator, I have had parents confront me regarding difficult children in the classroom. They ask, "Why are they still in our school?" "How long are we going to put up with this?" These aren't children who break in over the weekend and steal the science equipment or physically attack each other on the playground. They are children having difficulties with friendships. I do not want any child bullied, or hurt, or left out. I want to talk with them, teach them, and encourage empa-

thy. They make progress, but it is slow. Some parents want instantaneous change or just want them punished, insisting that it is time for the Law, not the Gospel. They believe children who need to learn these things should go somewhere else. How much should we take for granted?

Many schools have adopted commercial programs for emotional intelligence training. For those schools that have not, there are definite steps the classroom teacher may use to encourage emotional growth:

1. Be an emotionally intelligent example for the children in the classroom. They will learn by the way we treat them.
2. Talk openly about emotions. Help children to identify what they're feeling and provide examples of appropriate forms of expression in words and behaviors.
3. Provide an area in the classroom for peer mediation. Allow a "time out" when a child is having difficulty handling her or his emotions.
4. Read books to the class that teach appropriate behaviors. The limbic system responds to fables, myths, and symbols. Remember Jesus taught by parables.
5. *Reframe* situations for students. Explain and put things into perspective. Give them alternate ways of looking at things.
6. Use prayer. Prayer, meditation, and relaxation techniques have been shown to lower the set point of the amygdala making it less easily provoked and responsive to anger.—**LEJ**

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Marilyn Stroik has been teaching in the Lutheran Education system for the past 22 years at Grace Lutheran School in Oak Creek, WI. With her B.S. in early childhood and elementary education, and M.Ed. in language arts she has been recognized as an Outstanding Educator by the Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction. Her research into emotional intelligence, brain theory, and memory began with the diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease in her father, and helped her cope with some of the resultant behaviors. She can be reached by e-mail at SBGM64@hotmail.com.

Diversity in Faith-Based Counseling

by Kevin Loberger

A recent Gallup and Jones poll (2000) noted that 82% of Americans desire a greater intimacy with God. An increase of 24% occurred during the preceding four years. In addition, 94% of Americans declare a belief in God and 74% of survey participants stated that they made a commitment to Jesus Christ (Willard, 1997). Greely (1995) reported that 95% of Americans believe in a personal God, 66% believe in the existence of the devil, 90% believe in heaven and 75% believe in hell. Corbett (1997) found that about 60% of Americans are Protestant, 25% are Catholic, 2% are Jewish and 4% were identified as another preference. Furthermore, many Christians prefer faith-based Christian counseling when selecting a therapist (Clinton, 2001).

Christians who seek counseling often have conflict and unrealized therapeutic goals when working with counselors who do not share similar beliefs (Richards & Bergin, 1997). Adams (1973) cautions "Language at times can be determinative; it can spell the difference between success and failure in counseling." (p.103) For this reason, the development of rapport may be a difficulty between a Christian client and secular counselor. Research findings suggest that the utilization of therapeutic services increases when therapists have a match of shared language and understanding of the client's background (Maramba & Nagayama Hall, 2002) Furthermore, counselors whom clients believe have similar etiology attributions are judged to be more credible by the client (Worthington & Atkinson, 1996). Linguistic matching can serve as an effective "joiner" and improve the outcome throughout the therapeutic process.

Counseling models often include a focus on spirituality and religious issues (Giblin, 1996). Yet, counseling programs rarely include religious or spiritual education in the training of graduate students (Weaver, Koenig, & Larson, 1997). A lack of proper training may leave some secular counselors unable to meet the needs or unclear on how to meet the needs of Christian clients. Patrick, Beckenbach and Sells caution (1997) "Clients with a religious orientation might be errantly led to believe that a professional counselor is best suited to assist in a circumstance of personal crisis, transition, or decision making, when indeed a pastoral coun-

selor, more knowledgeable of the client's religious world view, may be a better choice." (p.3)

Secular Counselors and Christian therapists need to further clarify the distinctions and commonalties between each field. Such clarification will assist counselors and Christian counselors in addressing the mental health, religious and spiritual concerns of clients. The following will briefly explore the historical background, convergence and distinctiveness of Christian therapy within the mental health profession. It should be noted that due to the breadth of theological and therapeutic models an exhaustive study has not been attempted. Rather, significant approaches to Christian therapy will be explored.

Diversity and dispute of both modern theological and psychological thought illustrates the ever-growing pluralism in society. Tremendous diversity can be observed in the wide variety of theoretical approaches to counseling and human development. Adlerian, Freudian, Gestalt, rational-emotive (RET), Cognitive behavioral, family systems, Rogerian client-centered therapy, and social learning theory are among the most recognizable. Likewise, Christians have increasingly divided themselves into opposing groups. Denominations such as Roman Catholic, Methodists, Baptists, and Lutherans represent just a few of the Christian affiliations. Hundreds of Christian denominations have been established in the United States. Like their secular counterparts, many Christian counselors seem to derive therapeutic approaches from an eclectic utilization of psychological theory and methods as well as theological commitments (Collins, 1977; McMinn, 1996). Other Christian counselors insist on the exclusive use of the Bible (Adams, 1970).

Throughout the twentieth century, wide attitudinal variations were expressed toward religion by many prominent figures in psychology. In 1978, Carl Jung argued that "Religions are psychotherapeutic systems in the truest sense of the word, and on the grandest scale...nearly everything to do with religion, everything it is and asserts touches the human's soul so closely that psychology least of all can afford to overlook it." (Zinnbauer & Pargament, 2000 p.162-163). Furthermore, Jung (1933) makes the following declaration:

I have treated many hundreds of patients, the larger number being Protestants, a smaller number Jews and not more than five or six Catholics. Among all my patients in the second half of my life...there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that

every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers and none of them has really been healed who did not regain his religious outlook. (p. 269)

In addition, Alfred Adler co-authored a book with Dr. Ernst Jahn, a Lutheran pastor, in 1933 (Brett, 1998). Adler and Jahn discussed the role of counseling from both the Christian and Individual-Psychological viewpoints. It is interesting to note that Adler became a Protestant twenty-nine years earlier in 1904. For Adler, religion and God are an expression of man's ultimate goal leading toward perfection (Heinz, Rowena & Ansbacher, 1956). Religion, in Adler's view, can serve as a positive catalyst for social interest thus improving the welfare of mankind.

From a Christian standpoint, all relational interactions are rooted in the mediatorial role of Christ. Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1995) cautions "No psychology is able to help me find the way to another person's soul. The path is grounded in the mediatorial function of Christ. Christ the mediator stands between me and God, between me and my brother and sister" (p.180). Yet, Bonhoeffer (1998) explicitly advocates seeking Christian counsel stating "God has made it possible for human beings to seek counsel from others: it would be presumptuous folly if one were not to accept this offer" (p.249).

While some therapists have acknowledged the value of religion, other significant leaders in the mental health field have negatively characterized religious persons as simpleminded and disturbed (Ellis, 1971; Freud, 1927). Ellis (1971) argued that religion is, in fact, a cause of mental illness. More recently, however, Ellis (1993) backed away from such views and now suggests that psychological problems may be caused by fanatical and rigid religious views. Yet, the views Ellis refers to as fanatical and rigid are common doctrines of the Christian faith.

In a 1995 interview Ellis stated "If by religion we mean some absolute dogma—that there was a Jesus, that he was the Son of God, and that he, if we pray to him, will save us or, for that matter, destroy us, then religion is an opiate. That kind of dogma, that absolutism in religion, is pernicious and is a source of much human disturbance." (Elliot, 1995, pp.210-211). Similarly, Robb (1986) argued that the absolute thinking and dimension of supernaturalism in religion were root causes of mental disorders. In contrast, Larson and Larson (1994) insist that religious beliefs can improve mental and physical health. Research published between 1978 and 1989 was reviewed assessing the influence of religious

commitment variables on advancing mental health. Larson and Larson (1994) concluded that 92% of religious beliefs and practices positively advance mental and physical health.

Surprisingly, many Christian counselors have adopted Ellis' Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) within the Christian therapeutic approach (DiGiuseppe, Robin & Dryden, 1990; Johnson, 1992). Johnson (1993) even developed a protocol for Christian Rational Emotive Therapy and one Christian counselor stated it was likely the "most compatible with biblical teaching" of all other psychotherapeutic perspectives (Lawrence & Huber, 1982). Despite Ellis' negative view of Christianity, Ellis has acknowledged the positive influence of the Judeo-Christian Bible. Ellis (1993) states "I think that I can safely say that the Judeo-Christian Bible is a self-help book that has probably enabled more people to make more extensive and intensive personality and behavioral changes than all professional therapists combined" (p.336). Ironically, such "extensive and intensive" changes are likely due to the "pernicious" dogma that Ellis attacks.

Many prominent Christians have been critical of the field of psychology and counseling (Bobgan & Bobgan, 1987; Bulkley, 1993). Vitz (1977) argued that if psychology is presented as an organized set of beliefs, it should be rejected as a false religion. Catholic apologist and professor Peter Kreeft (1988) insisted "Pop psychology is basically non-religious Hinduism, humanistic pantheism" (p.93). Adams (1979) warned "Freud, Rogers and others...had come peddling wares of the enemy. They are his agents" (p.9).

As noted, the division within the Christian camps splits between conservative and moderate or liberal theologies. While, the conservatives produce strong polemics against unbiblical psychology, other Christians are less critical of the field. Many recognize the value of psychological theory, but seek to maintain the ultimate superiority of Christian truth. Haugk (1984) writes:

While the Freudian system does have value, and in many ways is indeed a deep system, when compared to the uniquely Christian system of caring for the individual, it is quite superficial. Infantile sexuality and libido do not seem so deep next to the basic questions and concerns of life, death, spirituality, and meaning. These later issues reach down to the deepest level of our being beyond the unconscious. (p.45)

Who can provide Christian Therapy?

Adams (1970) insists that Christian counselors must have formal the-

ological and biblical training. Adams places no significance on psychological or psychiatric training. For Adams, therefore, the individual properly suited to be a biblical counselor is a pastor not a psychologist. Haugk (1984) states that providing Christian therapy is the responsibility of every Christian. "The word therapy is derived from the Greek word *therapeuo* which means 'to serve,' 'to restore,' 'to care for' to wait upon or to treat medically. Whether you are clergy or lay, pro or semipro, you are a Christian therapist." (p.20) Haugk is the founder of the Stephen Ministries, which provides training resources and supervision for the lay Christian. For Haugk neither seminary nor psychological training is mandatory for the Christian therapist. Loyalty to Christ demands actively providing care and counsel to others.

Four Approaches of Christians in Counseling

Anderson, Zuehlke and Zuehlke (2000) developed four differing categories of Christian counseling, which include Bible-Only Counselors, Closed Counselors, Closet Counselors and Conjoint Counselors. These approaches show the great diversity with which privately professing Christians approach the therapeutic profession.

Bible-Only Counselors

The Bible-Only Counselors are often known as Nouthetic counselors (Adams, 1979). Jay Adams of Westminster Theological Seminary founded Nouthetic counseling. Adams' influence has been far reaching in the field of Christian Counseling. His methodology depends on an unshakable conviction of the active working of the person of the Holy Spirit in counseling.

Nouthetic counseling emphasizes the use of the Bible as a primary means of grace through which the Holy Spirit works. In addition, the Christian therapist provides prayer with, and for the client. Secular counterparts often avoid these unique Christian practices. Bible-only counselors are the group most vehemently against the influence of secular psychology. Nouthetic counselors are rooted in reformed theology and consider an integration of psychological principles as fundamentally false and often heretical.

Adams (1970) insists sanctification is the goal of Biblical counselors. Nouthetic counseling in its fullest sense then is simply an application of the means of sanctification. The prerequisite for sanctification is the Holy Spirit's presence in the life of a regenerate person. In Colossians 2 and Ephesians 4, Paul stressed this in his discussion of the new man and the renewal of God's image. This image was ruined at the fall. The goal

of counseling is the renewal of that image (pp.73-74).

It should be noted that sanctification in the Christian's earthly life is an imperfect and unsteady process. It is not a cause of justification. Grieving and emotionally troubled Christian clients should be reassured with the Gospel declaration of God's mercy throughout the therapeutic process. Undoubtedly, sanctification is a significant and worthwhile therapeutic goal. Yet, law will not bring any comfort to the troubled conscience. Therefore, the topic of sanctification should be presented within the context of the Gospel message.

In Adams' (1970) Nouthetic method, clients experience Nouthetic confrontation. This approach challenges the client with principles and practices derived from the Bible. Drawing on 2 Timothy 3:16 Bible-only counselors seek to instruct, correct and train Christian clients. Bible-only counselors view secular psychological methodology as superficial or even dangerous. For Bible-Only counselors sin is at the root of all problems. The universality of sin is the ultimate explanation for all troubles. They warn of an over estimation of the client's ability to heal the self, independent of God. Likewise, Bible-only counselors are concerned about the danger of the therapist playing God. As in all counseling approaches, limitations of this method must be acknowledged.

While the Bible is the norm of Christian faith and life, the Bible is not a systematic text of counseling. To counsel via scripture alone may at times leave the Christian therapist addressing issues not explicitly clarified in scripture. For the Bible-only counselor, the difficulty of *adiaphora* will inevitably arise. The

While the Bible is the norm of Christian faith and life, the Bible is not a systematic text of counseling.

Scriptures remain silent on a variety of issues that concern modern man. As Lutheran theologian Lorenz Wunderlich cautions:

There is a definite province of activity which is not specifically covered by either God's command or God's prohibition. If it were possible we could consider every conceivable act of man and evaluate it on the basis of the revealed will of God in His Holy Word in order to establish whether or not any divine statement has any bearing on it. If not, it is quite evidently a non-essential matter, an *adiaphoron*. Every day of our life is literally filled with acts and decisions concerning which there is no specific Scriptural injunction. Such matters are left by God to our personal discretion and judgment. (Laetsch, 1947 p.687)

In the strictest sense, Nouthetic confrontation demands a Scriptural injunction for the client. Absence of such a clear scripture would leave the Nouthetic counselor unable to assist. Or, possibly the Bible-only counselor might run the risk of stepping outside their authority.

A moderated approach of biblical counseling may rely on biblical principles for Christian living derived from scripture. In many cases, however, preservation of Christian liberty in matters not explicitly articulated in scripture should be acknowledged and preserved. While Scripture alone is true for theology and the doctrine of faith, it may not always meet the diversified needs of clients in therapy.

Closed Counselors

Closed Counselors are in direct contrast to Bible-only Counselors. Closed counselors are Christians who do not integrate any Christian elements into the therapy process (Anderson, Zuehlke and Zuehlke, 2000). Although privately professing Christians, these therapists may not believe Christianity addresses the therapeutic needs of the clients (Crabb, 1977). For some Closed Counselors, theology and psychology are viewed as two mutually exclusive domains.

MacArthur (1991) writes in challenge to this approach “I have no tolerance for those who exalt psychology above the Scripture, intercession and the perfect sufficiency of our God” (p.70). If Closed Counselors are liberal Christians, a cultural sensitivity to clients may take precedence over personally held religious views. For many liberals, the Bible is not viewed as the words of God. Rather, the Bible consists of words about God by well-intentioned writers two thousand years ago. Maintaining professional ethics and avoiding coercion of clients will be the Closed counselor’s guidelines in their secular counseling approach.

Closet Counselors

Closet counselors are Christians who recognize the therapeutic value of Christianity, but remain hesitant to openly integrate Christian practices in sessions. This may be due to legal and ethical fears or simply poor training. Tan (1996) found that 85% of therapists indicated no academic training in understanding the role of religion in therapy. In such cases, many therapists feel it is best to refrain from addressing religious issues in counseling. Some Closet counselors will welcome Christianity into the therapeutic process if and only if the client initiates the discussion (Anderson, Zuehlke and Zuehlke, 2000).

Like Closed counselors, avoiding coercion of the client is a founda-

tion of professional ethics. Some liberals maintain that just as Christian theological reflection and Biblical writings are culturally positioned in a historical context and location, the existential experience of clients is also culturally influenced. An imposition of Biblical demands on clients would ignore the current contextual needs of the clients. Closet counselors are often non-directive. Therefore, Closet counselors do not seek to control clients. Rather, openness and contextual sensitivity are to be maintained.

Conjoint/Integrationists

Integrationists seek to integrate applied psychology with theological and biblical foundations. Collins (1988) argues, "Eclecticism is not a haphazard, intellectually lazy collecting of ideas. Instead this is an approach that draws from the various sources in a thoughtful manner and enables you, in time, to arrive at your own style." (p.48). Furthermore, Collins (1977) suggests Christians can purge and correct erroneous assumptions of psychology with correct Christian theological understanding. McMinn (1996) endorses an integrationist approach, but stresses the importance of theology as a foundation for Christian counseling.

Integrationists often approach the Bible as God's special revelation and psychology as a source of God's general revelation. Thus, psychological theory is given a degree of credibility that Nouthetic counselors find abhorrent. Narramore (1973) declared a goal of combining "the special revelation of God's word with the general revelation studied by psychological sciences and professions" (p.17). Psychological theories such as those of Freud and Rogers are neither revelation nor truth. To state the obvious psychological theories remain theoretical. As such, they may aid the Christian therapist in practice or be discarded without compromising the revelation and truth of Christianity.

While disagreeing with aspects of psychological theories, Christian counselors following a conjoint approach maintain the flexibility to draw upon modern therapeutic methods. For instance, the Rogerian characteristics of empathy, unconditional positive regard and genuineness are strongly encouraged as an essential foundation for both the Christian counselor and secular counselor (Raskin, 1986; Muller & Kraus, 1990). In Pastoral Theology, Mueller and Krauss (1990) provide recommendations for Lutheran pastors during the counseling process. Without adopting a humanist philosophy, Muller and Kraus (1990) borrow freely from Rogers and maintain that the practice of genuineness and truthfulness is both biblical and necessary (Gal. 4:16) in the helping relationship.

For the Christian therapeutic approach, positive regard does not require agreeing with the sins of the individual, it is strongly rooted in the love of God and love of neighbor (Muller & Kraus, 1990). This example illustrates the effective integration of Roger's secular psychological technique and framework without compromising the unique Christian worldview.

Conclusions

The decision to counsel a client or provide a referral is enhanced by the continued clarification of the unique focus of Christian counseling. The specified needs of the client may determine whether a secular counselor or a Christian counselor would best serve in counseling the client. For example, a client with questions about God, death and morality may prefer a counselor willing to discuss religious and theological perspectives. Christian counselors are uniquely equipped in addressing the religious and spiritual concerns of clients.

Informed consent is necessary when engaging in Christian counseling. Initial paperwork should state clearly that the counseling promotes a value system and religious beliefs rooted in the Christian faith. Clients should be free to reject the counseling services, as they desire. An explicit

Fundamental truths such as the universal reality of sin and the subsequent alienation from God are at the heart of the Christian faith.

and directive Christian counseling is preferred to a covert intent to smuggle in Christian values on an unwitting client. Secular clients who prefer secular therapists should be allowed to make an informed decision. Likewise, Christian clients who desire to

explore the role their Christian faith and relationship to God can play in the healing process should not rely on secular counselors who harbor hostility toward Christianity.

Secular psychological theories can provide a useful framework for approaching and understanding the nature and behavior of humans. Yet, Christians should not adopt secular ideologies uncritically. The danger in selecting a secular counselor who employs a strictly secular worldview is seen at its worst when the counselors go so far as to assume that the cause of psychological problems is religious beliefs (Ellis, 1971).

Fundamental truths such as the universal reality of sin and the subsequent alienation from God are at the heart of the Christian faith. The Gospel can be introduced in a therapeutic and deeply healing manner.

While comfort and assistance can be experienced without reference

to faith, a counselor who recognizes the centrality and importance of the Christian faith can deal with the whole person more readily. The Closed and Closet counselors can effectively provide a therapeutic practice as secular therapists without explicit Christian references. Closed or Closet counselors may assist in providing useful common sense solutions to everyday problems. Yet, such approaches do not touch the deepest needs of Christian clients.

At the heart of Christian counseling is the message that we are a new creation in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17-20). Through Christ we are redeemed and reconciled to God. The new being emerges through the workings of the Holy Spirit. The sinful state in which each person is born has been forgiven. Because of Christ's great love and sacrifice, Christians are renewed and can enjoy an abundant life and the blessing of salvation. Although remnants of sin remain throughout life, God's love and forgiveness are poured out for all. The Christian counselor serves as another channel to share the comfort and joy of the gospel message.—*LEJ*

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Kevin Loberger received his Masters in Community Counseling from Concordia University, River Forest in December 2004, and has served the university as an adjunct professor in the Psychology Department. He has served as a counselor in community-based agencies in the Chicago area.

Administrative Talk...Making Decisions

By Glen Kuck

Let's begin with an assumption: The typical principal is overwhelmed with tasks. When it comes to making day-to-day decisions related to the school, he or she simply lacks sufficient time to thoroughly analyze a situation, consult a variety of people, read related literature, conduct a survey, hold a series of meetings, and then work in concert with the appropriate people to make and implement the resultant decision. Decisions are usually made far more expeditiously.

In the absence of time and resources, how can a principal consistently make wise decisions? A look at the corporate world may yield some helpful, and surprising, insights. In research on how decisions are made by managers and leaders in the business world, Henry Mintzberg (1998) found that decisions seldom come as the result of long, intensive, fact-finding studies by a group of people sitting around a table in the corporate boardroom. He writes:

Study after study has shown that managers work at an unrelenting pace, that their activities are characterized by brevity, variety, and discontinuity. . . . The chief executives met a steady stream of callers and mail from the moment they arrived in the morning until they left in the evening. . . . A diary study of 160 British middle and top managers found that they worked without interruption for a half hour or more only about once every two days. . . . When managers must plan, they seem to do so implicitly in the context of daily actions, not in some abstract process reserved for two weeks in the organization's mountain retreat. The plans of the chief executives I studied seemed to exist only in their head - as flexible, but often specific, intentions. (pp. 4-6)

Apparently the business world and the world of principals are not far apart.

The question remains, how can wise on-the-spot decisions be made in an atmosphere devoid of sufficient time and information? It's interesting to note the heavy reliance by many leaders on informal means of gleaning information.

Mintzberg quotes Richard Neustadt, who studied the way in which Presidents Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower collected information. "It is not information of a general sort that helps a President... not summaries, not surveys, not the bland amalgams. Rather . . . it is the odds and ends of tangible detail that pieced together in his mind illuminate the underside of issues put before him. To help himself he must reach out as widely as he can for every scrap of fact, opinion, gossip, bearing on his interests and relationships as President" (p. 9).

Principals may need to compensate for the lack of time and data gathering resources in similar ways. As Jerome Murphy put it, "They need to develop an informal system of constantly gathering information - from meetings, chance encounters, and casual conversations with candid and knowledgeable colleagues. Administrators need to recognize that the ability and willingness to ask good questions is central; administrators, like researchers, should be judged by the quality of their questions" (Murphy, 2000, p. 119).

This can be done without the need for principals to add more time to an already too full day. It becomes a matter of using good judgment and intuition to use opportunities as they arise.

For example, a school-sponsored spaghetti dinner is not merely an occasion for the principal to eat spaghetti; it's an opportunity to get a better sense of what individual school parents are thinking about the school as it relates to their children. The monitoring of a recess period is more than just a duty; it's a chance for the principal to get student input on a variety of subjects. A routine principal's report at a parent-teacher league meeting isn't just a chore to be performed; it's a chance to float new ideas and get feedback; the time after a faculty meeting isn't just a time to take care of last minute tasks; it's a time to get a better sense of how a teacher is feeling about things around school.

A principal needs to infuse in others the reality that he is sincere in his desire to understand things from their perspectives. He asks a lot of questions, but he also realizes that asking too many is both irritating and counterproductive. He is careful not to project the image of someone who thinks he knows it all. He understands that to be listened to, he has to listen. He listens for facts and for feelings.

There's a story about a guide who encountered a grizzly bear in the mountains of Montana. He shot the bear but was later criticized because

federal law in that area protected grizzlies. He responded, “When I saw that bear running toward me with his mouth wide open, it didn’t take me long to decide which of us was the endangered species.”

Principals often feel threats running at them with little time to decide upon a course of action. But those who have used their time wisely beforehand are best equipped to handle the onslaught. They have learned as much as they can from the people who comprise the school family. They have then blended this input with their own set of values and experiences to make wise decisions for both the short and long term.—*LEJ*

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Secondary Sequence...Dear CEO's

By Craig parrott

Dear CEO's and Boards of Directors of Lutheran Secondary Schools:

If you have not already read it, I urge you to grab a copy of the June 2005 issue of Christianity Today. Within its pages is an article on higher education that addresses the historical secularization of Christian colleges. The article states, "Today, schools connected to certain orthodox denominations – notably Southern Baptists, Missouri Synod Lutherans, and Churches of Christ – do face a real possibility of secularization. This is because these schools have always thought of their religious identity mainly in denominational terms, rather than thinking of themselves more broadly as Christian colleges. The hard truth is that the old denominational identity that has kept their schools Christian is dying."

I detect the same tension among Lutheran high schools that face tight budgets, dwindling enrollments, and a shrinking Lutheran population base. I am aware that the Association of Lutheran Secondary Schools has sought guidance in such books as Gung Ho and From Good to Great. I would like to offer one more good read that might serve as a compass for our journey toward solvency while remaining faithful to our Lord: Prophetic Untimeliness by Os Guinness. Guinness cautions the Christian church in its attempts to be relevant:

"By our determined efforts to redefine ourselves in ways that are more compelling to the modern world than are faithful to Christ, we have lost not only our identity but our authority and our relevance. . . .Therapeutic self-concern overshadows knowing God, spirituality displaces theology, marketing triumphs over mission, references to opinion polls outweigh reliance on biblical exposition, concerns for power and relevance are more obvious than concern for piety and faithfulness, talk of reinventing the church has replaced prayer for revival. . . .Modern assumptions from the spheres of management, marketing, and psychology (are) accepted without challenge. . . .Something new is assumed; something old is abandoned. . . .Does

the Head of the Church have anything to say or do the consultants have the last word? We have transferred authority from *Sola Scriptura* to *Sola Cultura*.”

I applaud your courage and humility if you are still reading. I realize that your position of leading a Lutheran secondary school is extremely difficult and challenging today. I do not envy your position nor do I wish to trade places with you. To use business parlance, I am not in management or marketing or advertising; I am in production. But I believe we can take our cue from what is produced in our communities, how it is produced, and Who produces it.

I realize that it is very tempting to portray ourselves in ways that the world admires. But if we offer only what other good Catholic, private, and public schools around us offer, then there is really no reason for us to exist. So what do we offer — what do we produce — that is unique and distinctive from our competition down the street? “I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

His almighty Word that intentionally permeates every aspect of our faith community produces this life-changing relationship with our Lord and Savior. Everything is by, for, and through Jesus (Col. 1:15-20) and every classroom, every activity, every teacher, every coach knows this and shows this in many and various ways. Our school knows that eternity is set in the hearts of men (Ecc. 3:11) and that ultimate life and meaning are found only in knowing Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit, Whose Word does not return void, works deeply in the souls of those in our faith community. They hear often that they have meaning and purpose, that they are loved and forgiven, that they have a future and a hope. And we trust in His ongoing work long after young people leave our doors with or without a diploma.

Through weak human instruments and through His abiding Word, God transforms minds (Rom. 12:2) in our communities and sets hearts on things above (Col. 3:3). He draws people to Himself, in Whom we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). His people in production humbly depend on Him for everything. Apart from Him we can do nothing, despite our best efforts at using the latest and greatest techniques or methods. In short, His grace is sufficient.

Guinness maintains that “relevance is at the very heart of the Gospel of Jesus and is the secret of the Church’s power down through history. . . .It is the best news ever because it addresses our human con-

dition appropriately, pertinently, and effectively as nothing else has, does or can – and in generation after generation, culture after culture, and life after life.” And our school proclaims this good news daily.

So dear brothers and sisters, what does this all mean? I urge you not to delicately dance around what we offer that is different from other schools but to boldly and faithfully proclaim it. Focus on pleasing Him and not men. Focus on being faithful, not successful. Focus on His will being done, not ours. It is, after all is said and done, His school, and His purposes will be achieved, with or without us.—**LEJ**

The Christopher Center at Concordia University has a new gallery of paintings, prints and drawings in memory of Del Klaustermeier, former art professor at Concordia now deceased. This collection reflects the interests Del had in his own work and teaching. Since he taught future teachers, his interests in education are reflected in several of the works. Another piece in the collection is by Timothy Botts, the well-known calligraphy artist. It illustrates a quote, "The purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows".

Entering Education

The Botts piece hangs beside a full-length second-floor window that looks down on the lobby of the Christopher Center. Standing at that window, one can see people of all ages entering the building. Young children are headed for their early childhood classrooms on the first floor. University students are headed for classrooms on the second floor. Professors may be headed for those same places, or for their offices on the third floor. Teachers from the area may be headed for the Resource Center or lecture halls for teaching materials, information and inspiration. Those people, coming and going, know that the purpose of this building is education of teachers and of children, inspiring a quest for learning lasting much longer than the hours spent here, giving them the tools to open windows to learning for all children.

Windows and Mirrors

Those windows of learning are the real purpose of education. Giving children – students of all ages – the tools to discover the world and its mysteries is the inspiration those students need in order to further their personal, life-long quest for learning.

All of us begin our quest for knowledge and information through mirrored lenses. We see only what is important to our immediate lives and interests. We reach out for whatever will meet our needs at the moment. We look at meaning as instantaneous, individual, and personal.

Mirrors and Windows

Mirrors are treated to reflect the images before them.

They serve an important purpose in our lives. They can be utilitarian or decorative. They can serve the simple purpose of allowing us to check the things we can't easily see naturally. But they also have a limited perspective. They can reflect; they cannot imitate. They look to what is and what has been; they cannot provide a perspective into the future. Windows, on the other hand, look outward. Their perspective is to look beyond themselves. Their task is to shed light on what is and on what is possible. This function creates possibilities for the present and for the future, giving the viewer choices on what to see and how to see them.

Paul, the Apostle, also spoke of windows. He used a "darkened glass" (a "glass darkly" in the King James translation) to describe how we see things today. He spoke of "face to face" as the eventual goal. Could it be that the darkened glass is like a mirror – with one side darkened so that transparency has been eliminated? Could it be that the "face to face" view is with the clarity of faith?

The Goals of Education

Isn't that our real goal? The clarity of the sight of faith? As Lutheran teachers, our task is to turn the mirrors of limited vision into the windows of the possibilities and promises of faith. Those promises and possibilities include the greater horizons of general learning as well as the vision of faith – faith in oneself and the horizons of learning as well as the focused and saving faith in Jesus Christ and the horizons of heaven.

"The purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows" is an apt metaphor for all of education and an even more powerful metaphor for Christian education. The young children in your care are waiting for those windows. Help them create them.—*LEJ*

Today's Lutheran Educator...Celebrate!

By Jonathan C. Laabs

The summer usually provides educators in Lutheran ministries an opportunity to take at least a bit of time to join family, friends, neighbors and colleagues in celebrations of one type or another. Many are in the process of getting married, arranging for weddings of children, or participating in the celebration of other's special days. Family gatherings take place in every corner of the country and outside the United States as well. Special national holidays such as Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day provide opportunities to celebrate a special cause, memory, or value that we enjoy as people who have something in common.

During the rest of the year, we have ongoing reasons to celebrate just because of what we do! What better place to take advantage of the many joys we experience in teaching the children, youth and adults whom God has entrusted to our care on a day to day basis? In what other profession can we feel so fulfilled, motivated, energized, mobilized and enabled to carry out a mission of the highest importance with others who share our commitment to serve? We have, indeed, an opportunity to celebrate with every decision, lesson, Bible study, field trip, chapel talk, basketball game, PTL meeting and staff devotion.

In the ministry of Lutheran education, we are not often in the celebrating mood! The challenges of everyday planning, dealing with emotions and human behavior, time constraints, and outside regulations often cause us to become disillusioned, suspicious, hesitant, angry and just plain tired at the end of the day. The details of the "job" interfere with the joys of the ministry. We lose our perspective and miss out on the tremendous blessings that each day of service to God's people brings to our lives. There can come a time in each Lutheran educator's life when celebrating is simply not in the picture.

Once every three years, LEA has sponsored a Convocation, bringing together over 4400 Lutheran educators to celebrate the blessing of Lutheran education ministry given to a globally diverse assortment of indi-

viduals who have responded to God's call. In April of 2005, this event was once again an energizing highlight for those who attended. Worship, education, social interaction and exposure to new ideas were all part of the large celebration. It is important to come together at events such as this to become regenerated for lives of service in our respective places of ministry. Similar conferences and workshops take place at district, regional and local levels each year.

What are you doing to celebrate with your colleagues the great challenge that God has placed in your future and the blessings that He has given you in your ministry so far? Have you taken time to share your joy with your staff? Have you created a "celebration" atmosphere in your place of ministry? Do you go to your place of work each day in a "celebration mode?" With the calling we all have to serve our Lord through Lutheran education, we have every reason to celebrate each day. I look forward to our next celebration together.—*LEJ*

Multiplying Ministries...Its Ael About the Alpha and Oemaega

By Rich Bimler

Check out this story: “Aoccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn’t mtttaer in waht Oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclac. The rset can be a total mses and you can stitll raed it wouthit porbelm Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig, huh?”

So, fellow educators, including spelling teachers, what does this mean for us today? A great quewsthun...I mean question...don’t you think?

First of all, it is all about the Alpha and Omega: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, is the One who gives us purpose and hope in all of life. Check out Revelation 1:8; 21:6; and 22:13 for additional reflections. As long as we get our “beginning” and “ending” right, we are able to live life to the fullest. If we are unclear about our own beginnings and endings, we will have trouble “spelling out” the rest of our life.

The Alpha of our lives begins at our Baptism. We are called by God, marked with the sign of the cross, by the water, and the Word. We know who and Whose we are because of our Baptism...and no one will ever take that away from us!

A friend of mine tells the story of how he drives his son to school each day. As the boy is getting out of the car, the dad always says, “Remember who you are!” One day the dad was running late and quickly zipped up to the school entrance and tried to hurry his boy out of the car, without saying the magic words. The boy got out of the car, looked back at his dad, and, with a concern on his face, said, “Dad, are you forgetting who you are?”

Even when we forget who we are, and even when we forget who those around us are, the Lord never forgets that we are His...marked with the Promise of our Baptism. Baptism gets all of our beginnings correct!

The Omega of our lives means knowing how it all turns out. Our endings are always, in faith, focused on

the Cross and the Resurrection. We live on “this side” of the Resurrection. We know how it all turns out. Christ is victorious! He has won over death! The Devil and our sin are defeated! We win! Hooray!

Another friend of mine (I have two friends!) reads a lot of novels. She drives me crazy by always reading the last chapter first. Now that’s NOT the way to read...we all know that. Didn’t she listen to our English teachers?

However, as she explains it, the reason she reads the last chapter first is to find out how it all turns out. By understanding the end of the story, she can then go back and begin reading the book from the beginning. It helps her to know which characters are the main ones, what details are most important, and which items are not. It helps her to better understand what the story is all about!

And that’s exactly what happens to us. We know how it all turns out. Christ wins! And so do we. We are Resurrection Resources! Alleluia is our song! We know what is important in life. We understand that life in the Lord is to be lived...and lived to the full. Christ is alive in us and has set a place for us in Eternal life. Wow, what an Omega to look forward to!

The Alpha is our Baptism and the Omega is knowing that Christ has taken care of our future, in Him. And that leaves the “in-betweens” of life to deal with joyfully and enthusiastically. Just like the spelling of the words above, as long as we know our Beginning and our Ending, we are in great shape to enjoy and be creative with our “in-betweens”.

So rejoice in your daily life of Now! Enjoy the blessings and the challenges and the gifts that God has given you and the people around you! Sure, try to live your life to get the “spelling” correct. But even when we mis-spell parts of our life’s, live in the knowledge that God in Christ has forgiven each of us.

Knowing our Alpha and Omega allows us to celebrate life in the midst of confusion and chaos. It enables us to remember that each of us is a special person of God. It empowers us to live our lives in service and care for others around us...and throughout the world. What do we have to lose? Nothing! The Alpha and the Omega are all we need.

Blessings to you as we all continue to live out the “in-betweens” of our lives, joyfully proclaiming Christ to our families, classrooms, staffs, and to the world. More power to you, as people “read us” as God’s people, not because we have lived our lives in strict order, but that we are focused on Christ Jesus, our Alpha and Omega!

Life really is like a big Spelling Bee ...and we are all winners, because of our Baptism and Resurrected life in Christ!

P.S. Can you even imagine the struggles my 'spel chequer' had while trying to make sense out of this article.—*LEJ*

A Final Word... Wisdom

By Dr. John F. Johnson

The distinction between wisdom and knowledge has become almost a trite one. Whereas knowledge is the possession of information and facts, wisdom lies in their application. It remains a good and helpful distinction. However, this issue of the journal leads with an insightful article by Ralph Peters appealing to the Christian understanding of the Trinitarian nature of God as a template for wisdom. His perspective prompts, once again, a reconsideration of the purpose of Christian education.

What are the goals and purposes of education (here at Concordia University or at the congregational schools so many of you readers serve, for that matter)? Is the purpose of education to simply impart facts and data or to clarify values? Is the purpose of education to provide skills for earning a livelihood or to be a better citizen? What are the non-negotiable subjects in a curriculum? If you wish an intellectual workout (and even a physical one!) raise these questions in a group of educators, philosophers, or engaged parents. Disagreement on the answers abound.

For the Christian, of course, of supreme importance is the knowledge of one Person—"I know Him in whom I have believed..." All human knowledge is ultimately irrelevant unless it is anchored in the knowledge of God revealed in Christ and communicated through the Spirit in the Word. God's ultimate purpose is not to "mystify" the truth but to reveal it, not to hide knowledge of Him but to communicate it. This is the beginning of wisdom and it must remain at the core of the Christian educational enterprise.—*LEJ*

